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Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 119503
ORIGIN EA-12

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----------066320 110316Z /61
P 102237Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP

SUBJECT: TRADE FACILITATION COMMITTEE: ACCJ AUTOMOTIVE STUDY

REF: (A) TOKYO 6486 (B) TOKYO 7961

1. DURING LUNCHEON MEETING OF APCAC LEADERS AND ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS MAY 4, BOB PERKINS, WHO REPRESENTS CHRYSLER IN TOKYO, ASKED STATE REP TO EXPLAIN REPORT HE HAD RECEIVED FROM CHRYSLER HEADQUARTERS THAT A STATE DEPT OFFICIAL HAD CALLED CHRYSLER TO REGISTER MISGIVINGS ABOUT ACCJ AUTOMOBILE SECTOR STUDY. PERKINS SAID OTHER US AUTO FIRM REPS IN TOKYO HAD RECEIVED SIMILAR MESSAGES FROM THEIR HEAD OFFICES.

2. NO ONE PRESENT AT LUNCHEON COULD EXPLAIN CALLS REPORTED BY PERKINS. BELIEF ON PART OF ACCJ THAT DEPT SOUGHT TO
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UNDERMINE ITS EFFORTS WOULD DO SERIOUS HARM TO TFC AND RELATED EFFORTS IN TOKYO, AND WE THEREFORE WISH TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT.

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3. AS BEST WE CAN PIECE EVENTS TOGETHER HERE, USG OFFICIAL (NOT IN STATE DEPT) WHO HAD ACCESS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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REFTEL PASSED ON CONTENTS OF PARA 7 DURING DISCUSSION WITH AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION. MEMBER OF LATTER GROUP EVIDENTLY INFORMED HEADQUARTERS OF BIG THREE AUTO MANUFACTURERS, WHO IN TURN CONTACTED THEIR TOKYO REPS. AS INFORMATION PASSED THROUGH THESE STAGES, EMBASSY VIEWS THAT STUDY SHOULD NOT BE TSG PROJECT WAS EVIDENTLY DISTORTED AND PORTRAYED AS STATE DEPT OPPOSITION TO THE STUDY. AS EMBASSY AWARE, NO ONE IN WASHINGTON AGENCIES HAS YET SEEN ACCJ AUTOMOTIVE STUDY. FYI: WE HAVE REPORT THAT AUTOMOBILE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION EMBELLISHED EMBASSY'S COMMENTS IN PASSING THEM TO CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS AND MAY HAVE ADDED MISGIVINGS OF ITS OWN ABOUT DRAFT STUDY. IN RETROSPECT, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER TO OMIT POTENTIALLY SENSITIVE COMMENTARY FROM UNCLASSIFIED CABLES. END FYI.

4. PERHAPS MAIN LESSON TO BE DERIVED FROM THIS INCIDENT IS IMPORTANCE TO ACCJ OF USG SUPPORT. WE ARE CONTACTING AUTO MANUFACTURERS TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT. DEPT IS WRITING TO PERKINS TO DO LIKEWISE AND TO EMPHASIZE IMPORTANCE USG PLACES ON TSG/ACCJ SECTORAL STUDIES. EMBASSY MIGHT ALSO REASSURE ACCJ, AND PERKINS, IF APPROPRIATE, OF OUR CONTINUED STRONG SUPPORT OF THE TSG.

5. WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE WORK ON AUTOMOTIVE SECTOR GO FORWARD AND PRODUCE USEFUL RESULTS. IF EMBASSY CONTINUES TO
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SEE CONFRONTATIONAL SITUATION DEVELOPING OR TO HAVE OTHER SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT ACCJ STUDY, WE WOULD APPRECIATE FULL REPORT. WE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO HAVE A COPY OF THE DRAFT STUDY. VANCE

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